

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

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INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI PRIORITY

CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI PRIORITY

CINCPACREPPH SUBIC BAY RP PRIORITY

JCS WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

13THAF CLARK AB RP PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 10901

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MILI, RP, US

SUBJECT: CALL ON DEFENSE MINISTER ENRILE

1. SUMMARY: I PAID COURTESY CALL ON DEFENSE MINISTER ENRILE JUNE 27 ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR SNEIDER. 45-MINUTE CONVERSATION FOCUSED ON KOREA AND NORTHEAST ASIA BUT ENRILE HAD QUERIES AND OBSERVATIONS ALONG THE WAY ABOUT THE SOVIET FLEET, VIETNAM, INDIAN OCEAN, AFGANISTAN AND NORTH YEMEN. ENRILE REQUESTED WE PROVIDE INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING ON POLITICAL AND MILITARY FORCES AT WORK IN AREA STRETCHING FROM MIDDLE EAST TO NORTHEAST ASIA. REFERRING TO PRESIDENT'S ANNAPOLIS SPEECH, ENRILE SAID THE GOP IS NOW LESS APPREHENSIVE ABOUT THE US "MEETING THE CHALLENGES," INCLUDING THOSE IN ASIA. ON THE PHILIPPINE SCENE, ENRILE COMMENTED BRIEFLY ON THE SPRATLYS, MINDANAO AND COMMUNIST/SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS. END SUMMARY.

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2. REQUEST FOR POLITICAL-MILITARY BRIEFING. AMBASSADOR SNEIDER REVIEWED THE SITUATION IN KOREA AND, IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES FROM ENRILE, SURVEYED OTHER FACTORS BEARING ON THE NORTHEAST ASIA EQUATION. ENRILE SAID THE GOP DOES NOT HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF ALL FACETS OF THE NORTH-EAST ASIA SITUATION AND SUGGESTED THAT A DETAILED BRIEFING BE PROVIDED. (ENRILE NOTED HE IS PASSING UP AN INVITATION

TO VISIT SEOUL IN OCTOBER IN PART BECAUSE OF UNCERTAINTY OVER THE SITUATION.) ENRILE, AFTER (A) REFERRING TO INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE REGION, (B) ASKING WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGANISTAN IS MARXIST, (C) INQUIRING ABOUT THE ASSASSINATION OF THE RULER OF NORTH YEMEN AND (D) ASKING ABOUT CURRENT TROUBLES BETWEEN HANOI AND PEKING, SUGGESTED THAT THE US BRIEFING BE EXPANDED TO COVER THESE ISSUES AND ANYTHING ELSE SIGNIFICANT IN THE ARC OF LAND AND SEA BETWEEN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTHEAST ASIA.

3. US POLICY IN ASIA. AMBASSADOR SNEIDER DESCRIBED CONTINUING US EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN THE POWER BALANCE IN KOREA AND NORTHEAST ASIA, EMPHASIZING (A) THE CARE WHICH IS BEING TAKEN IN OUR TROOP DRAW-DOWN AND (B) THE FACT THAT AIR POWER IS BEING AUGMENTED. ENRILE RECALLED THE GOP HAD HAD APPREHENSIONS ABOUT THE US COMMITMENT TO ASIA AFTER VIETNAM BUT THESE APPREHENSIONS HAVE NOW BEEN LARGELY DISPELLED. HE REFERRED IN THIS CONNECTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S ANNAPOLIS SPEECH, NOTING THAT THE US AGAIN APPEARS WILLING TO MEET THE CHALLENGE.

4. VIETNAM. ENRILE SAID THE GOP HAS INFORMATION THAT CUBANS, ALONG WITH EAST GERMANS, ARE NOW QUITE ACTIVE IN VIETNAM.

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5. SPRATLYS. ENRILE SAID THE GOP WILL NOT LEAVE ITS ISLAND HOLDINGS IN THE AREA "WEST OF PALAWAN" BECAUSE VIETNAM WOULD THEN MOVE IN. HE SAID THAT VIETNAM HAS CONTINUED TO FORTIFY SOME OF ITS HOLDINGS WITH ANTI-AIRCRAFT INSTALLATIONS AND "HEAVY GUNS." (COMMENT: HE DID NOT RPT NOT OFFER ANY DETAILS.)

6. MINDANAO. ENRILE REVIEWED THE SITUATION IN MINDANAO IN FAMILIAR TERMS, REFERRING TO THE LEADERSHIP SPLIT IN THE MNLF, NOTING THAT SUPPORT TO THE MNLF FROM ABROAD IS DOWN, AND OBSERVING THAT FIGHTING HAS EBBED ALTHOUGH THERE ARE OCCASIONAL INSURGENT AMBUSHES.

7. COMMUNIST/SUBVERSIVES. ENRILE SAID THAT COMMUNIST INSURGENTS HAVE BEEN WEAKENED BY LOSS OF LEADERSHIP AND LACK OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION. HE REFERRED TO THE RECENTLY DISCOVERED SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATION WHICH "HAS THE SAME POLITICAL TENETS AS THE COMMUNISTS BUT RECOGNIZES GOD." HE SAID THE ORGANIZATION SEEKS A "SOCIALIST DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC." ENRILE SAID THAT THREE FILIPINO RELIGIOUS PERSONALITIES ARE INVOLVED. HE MAINTAINED THE ORGANIZATION IS NOT EFFECTIVE NOW BUT HAS A "FAIRLY SIZEABLE FOLLOWING."

8. ACTION REQUESTED. WHILE NO DATE WAS SUGGESTED FOR THE BRIEFING REQUESTED BY ENRILE, WE WOULD HOPE THAT APPROPRIATE MATERIAL MIGHT BE PULLED TOGETHER BY WASHINGTON AGENCIES WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WHICH WE COULD THEN PRESENT TO ENRILE AND HIS STAFF. MURPHY

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